

You're a hunter? Thank you!

While vocal anti-hunters may lead you to believe otherwise, the vast majority of Americans accept hunting as an appropriate outdoor activity. National public opinion surveys show that about 75 percent of the American population supports legal hunting. And why not? Hunting is carefully regulated, ensuring that wildlife populations remain healthy and stable. It's an American tradition, like baseball and apple pie. And it generates billions of dollars annually, boosting local economies and supporting the state agencies that manage wildlife populations.

According to the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, "Hunting in America is big business, generating more than \$67 billion in economic output and more than one million jobs in the United States." Its annual report, *Economic Importance of Hunting in America*, states that more than 13 million Americans age 16 and older hunted in 2001. "On average, each hunter spends \$1,896 per year on hunting, which is 5.5% of the typical wage earner's annual income. These expenditures then 'ripple' through the economy generating three times more impact for the U.S. economy," according to the report.

Hunters also pay "a truckload of special excise taxes." The Wildlife Restoration Fund, popularly known as the Pittman-

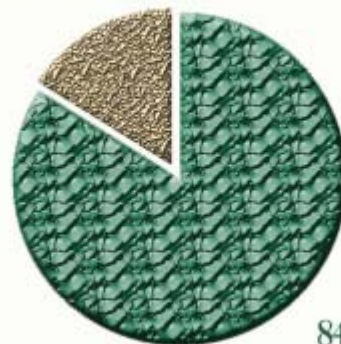
Robertson (P-R) Act after its congressional sponsors, is considered to be the most successful wildlife conservation program in American history. Supported by hunters and

signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1937, the P-R Act imposes an 11 percent tax on sporting arms, archery equipment and ammunition, and a 10 percent tax on

Hunters put billions into the economy and fund the most successful wildlife restoration program in history

P-R Fund Expenditures in California

16% Hunter Education



84%
Habitat Restoration/Maintenance
and Wildlife Research and Management

handguns. The money is distributed to all 50 states and several U.S. territories, to be used for hunter education, habitat restoration, wildlife research and more. Since the program began, hunters have paid more than \$4 billion into the program.

In 2003, California received more than \$7 million in P-R funding, most of which is being spent to manage 13 wildlife areas statewide. The 13 wildlife areas comprise over 200,000 acres, including 44,000 acres of managed wetlands. These lands support upland game, several million waterfowl, and many other wildlife species, including threatened and endangered species. All of the wildlife areas that receive support from P-R funds offer hunting and other recreational opportunities; in fact, more than 450,000 recreation "user-days" are provided at these areas each year.

Another 15 percent of the P-R fund supported hunter education efforts. About 30,000 new hunters are trained in California each year.

The rest of the P-R funding, about 21 percent, supports important research and wildlife

management projects. Species that have benefited from America's hunters include wild turkeys, pronghorn antelope, Rocky Mountain elk, black bears, white-tailed deer, bighorn sheep, and a host of other game and non-game species.

According to John Carlson, chief of the DFG's Wildlife

Programs Branch, "Hunters pay their own way, and then some. They deserve a great deal of credit and recognition for the enormous contributions they've made to wildlife in this state, and across the country."

So spread the word. If you're a hunter: thank you!



DFG photos by Robert Waldron

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